

Small Essay

on
Typhus Fever

Respectfully submitted

To

The Faculty

of

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of

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two

By

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of

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An essay
on
Typhus fever.

The disease denominated typhus, or typhus fever is a peculiar febrile disease, distinct from all others, distinguished by a peculiar group of symptoms and produced probably by a peculiar cause. The origin of the term (from the Greek typhos stupor) indicates the general character of affection.

The symptoms of this remarkable disease are too numerous to be described particularly in one short essay. We shall therefore content ourselves with a description of the more prominent and characteristic symptoms of the affection.

Symptoms. Typhus rarely sets in with symptoms those marked symptoms which are observable in other forms of fever. It is usually preceded by certain morbid sensations such as slight pains in the

head back and limbs with a sense of
soreness and weariness after exertion.
Some degree of gastric derangement also
exists. In general these symptoms give
no alarm and means to ward off an attack
are seldom employed. After the lapse of a
few days or a week there is usually an
increase of the above symptoms. There is a
severe pain in the head, back, loins,
and lower extremities, sometimes accom-
panied with nausea, and vomiting. There
are, also, great weakness, and prostration
of strength. Alternate chills and heat
great restlessness and sleeplessness
anxiety and depression of spirits now
supervene. The pulse is frequent irr-
egular and feeble. The bowels are con-

The febrile condition is marked
by the usual symptoms of a hot dry skin
rapid pulse forced tongue pain in

the head and sometimes by vomiting
and vomiting generally there is great
~~thirst~~ thirst though sometimes it is
nauseating The patient seldom has any
appetite for food The tongue at this stage
is usually covered with a white coat or
with one a little tinged with yellow
The face presents a peculiar aspect that
of a dark red or of a dusky hue with
injection of the eyes and no after
congestion of the mucous membrane
of the nostrils and fauces The pain
in the head which is usually seated
in the frontal portion is intense The
mind often gives evidence of sluggish-
ness and occasionally slight aberration
is observable The bowels are cos-
tive and no stools are procured but
by artificial means The patient is
extremely restless and obtains no

refreshing sleep. If the disease is allowed
to progress it in a short time attains
its height. The heat of the surface is
intense and of that peculiar character
designated by the phrase calor mordax.
The temperature of the body afterwards
to the alarming height of 106° or 109° F.
The pulse is alarmingly rapid the
artery at the wrist giving 120 or 160
even strokes even in the minute.
The respiration is also frequent and
when examined by the stethoscope
is found to be feeble and imperfect
in the back and lower part of the
chest which is also dull on percussion.
Meanwhile there is a paroxysmal
tendency in the febrile symptoms
and exacerbation generally takes
place towards night and remission
in the morning.

A characteristic eruption
makes its appearance which entitles
the disease to be ranked among the
exanthemata. This eruption is confined
to no particular portion of the external
surface but appears on the neck
trunk and extremities. It consists of
small redish spots differing in mag-
nitude from the eighth quarter
or half inch in diameter or they
may appear as mere specks on the
surface. These spots differ in color ac-
cording to circumstances or the stage
of the disease. They may be red purple
ish violet or almost black. They
are seldom elevated above the surface
and will often disappear on being
pressed with the finger but will
immediately return on removing
the pressure except when they

assume a very dark or blackish
color. This eruption may appear from
the third to the thirteenth day though
usually it makes its appearance from
the fifth to the eighth day and
continues eleven or twelve days.
Occasionally it disappears and after
a short time makes its appearance
again. The tongue at this stage
usually assumes a brownish color
and is more or less dry especially
in the middle while in some
cases a dark sordes begins to collect
upon the teeth gums and lips.
Sometimes the tongue is clean
and glossy and sometimes in the
progress of the disease it assumes
an appearance not unlike that of
raw beef. The patient in general
has no appetite though there is

not that loathing of food which
is often experienced in other fevers
The bowels are generally confined no
stools are procured except by artificial
means and these are extremely
offensive occasionally diarrhoea
takes place The abdomen is some
times quite flat sometimes ^{moderately} ~~moderately~~
erectly swollen and tympanitic
The urine is in small quantities
and high colored occasionally
it is wholly suppressed sometimes
bleeding at the nose occurs a pecu-
liar and characteristic odor ischa-
les from the body which can be
~~more easily~~ appreciated than
described
Nervous symptoms are now prom-
inent Though the headache
and general pains may be less

severe there is a morbid sensitiveness of the skin which causes the patient to complain when pressure is made upon any part of the body. Dizziness, double vision, humming or ringing in the ears and partial deafness are not unusual symptoms.

As the disease progresses the characteristic stupor is more and more developed amounting sometimes though not often to a comatose state of the brain. In general the patient will answer questions correctly though he does it reluctantly being inclined to say but ^{those} are to remain in perfect silence. When requested to protrude his tongue he does so

partially but often forgets
to draw it back. He takes but
little notice of what is passing
around him being totally
indifferent to nearly every pass-
ing event. He sometimes gazes
about the room with a vacant st-
are his countenance assume
ing an appearance not unlike
that of a drunken man. Someti-
mely the comatose gives place to a
low muttering delirium. The
patient is entirely unconscious
of pain or suffering. If asked
how he feels he uniformly re-
plies that he feels well. Now
and then great restlessness and
fascitation occur with muscle-
or twitchings in various parts of
the body.

Symptoms of debility usu-
ally accompanying those of
perverted function while
consciousness remains one of
the most distressing sensations
is a sense of utter helples-
ness. The patient often feels
himself to be sinking down
into the earth while he is
perfectly destitute of adequate
power to prevent the misfor-
tune. This to the patient
is often a very distressing
sensation. At this stage of
the disease Syncope often
occurs even when slight ex-
citations are made and sinking
spells come on him which
indicate the greatest danger.
As an accompaniment there

is a sense of great oppression in
the chest The patient feels
as if deprived of air and as if
suffocation would inevitably
take place

If there be no abatement of
the fever it now passes over to
the third stage in which the
patient lies on his back ~~sinking~~
~~sinking~~ sinking down in ^{depression} ~~the~~
from utter prostration his
eyes half closed his mouth par-
tially open his hands constantly in
motions grasping at imaginary
objects while he is uttering an in-
coherent and unintelligible jir-
gon His tongue is dry and thickly
coated and deglutition is extremely
difficult from the want of muscular
energy The pupil is sometimes

dilated and sometimes contracted
Occasionally involuntary discharges
from the bowels and bladder
take ^{place} and sometimes the urine
is suppressed The surface has in
a great measure lost its sensibility
the strongest irritants make
little or no impression The ex-
tremities are cold the skin pale
the features collapsed and of an earthy
hue The pulse is frequent and flut-
tering small and feeble and
often scarcely perceptible at the
wrist

Even in this state the case
is not desperate and suitable
remedies have been successful
But if death take place it is gen-
erally without violence The respi-
ration becomes slower and slower.

the pulse weaker and weaker
until the patient ceases to breathe
and the heart ceases to move If
death occur at an earlier stage of the
feveritis in general with some vio-
lence and is apparently far more
distressing

When convalescence takes place
previous to collapse it is usually pre-
ceded by less frequency of pulse by
moisture on the tongue by a relaxed
state of the skin and by returning
consciousness Sometimes it is
 ushered in by an event which may
be regarded as forming a crisis Thus
a copious perspiration may occur
or there may be a copious discharge
of urine or the patient may fall
into a quiet slumber and awake
free from delirium and much improved

When convalescence takes place subsequent to collapse, it is usually slow and almost imperceptible for a time. The fever having spent its fury leaves the patient in a state of extreme exhaustion. The vital powers being almost extinct time must elapse ere health can return and the natural vigor of the frame be restored. The fever is usually succeeded after the lapse of some time by sound health.

The duration of typhus depends some what on the climate where it occurs as well as ~~on~~ other circumstances. When it terminates favorably it may have a run of two weeks or more one week in the advance one in the formed stage and ^{one} in the decline. Sometimes

it terminates sooner sometimes
not as soon I have known it
to run twenty eight days without
any perceptible abatement
Fatal cases may terminate at any
period sometimes death occurs
within twenty-four hours before reaction
takes place sometimes on the
fourth or fifth day But in
general it does not take place
until about the end of the second
week It may occur at a much
later period

varieties The varieties of typhus arise
from the difference of degree and
from its complication with other
disease Sometimes it is very
mild and terminates favorably
without much medical aid but
other times it is ushered in by

the most alarming symptoms
and terminates fatally without
any reaction or with a very im-
perfect one or the peculiar forms
of typhus may be partially
developed at the first and grad-
ually increase in violence until
fully established. This fever is
not infrequently associated with
other forms of disease. Pneumo-
nia often assumes the typhus
form. When this is the case the
patient coughs and expectorates
a rusty bloody sputa. There are
dullness on percussion and the
absence of the respiratory mur-
mur. The crepitant or the subcrepi-
tant rale is heard. It may also
become associated with the bilious
and typhoid fevers.

There is generally a strong tendency ^{anatomical} to a speedy putrefaction after death. The brain is found to be in an abnormal state. There is venous congestion within the cranium and also the effusion of serum into the ventricle or under the arachnoid and the substance of the brain is sometimes darker than in health though in other cases it is unaltered or nearly so.

The mucous membrane of the nostrils and fauces as also of the bronchial tubes are found in an inflamed state. The lower portion of the posterior part of the lungs is also inflamed though it is not often found to have passed into the state of hepatization.

The gastric mucous membrane is found in a diseased state but that

of the intestinal canal is in general healthy

The glands of Peyer are healthy except in some rare cases when it is presumable that the fever was associated with the enteric

Sometimes the spleen is softened and enlarged at other times it is in a normal condition. The liver is either healthy or enlarged or engorged with blood. The heart is sometimes healthy sometimes softened

Cause

Among the causes of Typhus may be reckoned unhealthy localities ill ventilated apartments unwholesome food exposure to damp night air and to the peculiar miasma of certain climates

By some medical writers
it is thought to be propagated
by contagion whether or not this is
the fact I shall not now attempt
to decide It may I apprehend be
thus propagated where there is a
predisposition in ^{the} organism to
the disease

Diagn

The more characteristic sym-
toms of typhus along with fever
are prostration of strength a
dark red and dusky hue of coun-
tenance suffusion of the eyes stupor
dark spots about the tongue teeth
etc constipation of the bowels in
the earliest stage the peculiar
odor the peculiar eruption and
the collapse of the last stage
The disease with which it is often

associated and often confounded
in the enteric or typhoid but
there is a essential difference
between the two diseases for
general the peculiar symptoms
of typhus are more clearly develop-
ed in the first stage than
are those of enteric. The bowels are
not so easily affected by artificial means
and when stools are procured they
are of a darker color and more offen-
sive. Hemorrhages from the bowels which
frequently take place in the advanced
stages of typhoid seldom occur in typhus
as also epistaxes or bleeding at the nose.
The characteristic eruption of the one
differs from that of the other. It
appears at a more advanced stage of
the disease is less regular in form is
of a darker color is not confined to

the chest and abdomen but it extends
equally over the extremities is less
elevated and is not so easily affected by
pressure. Sometimes there is an eruption
of a lighter color and more easily effected
by pressure not unlike the one that ap-
pears in typhoid. But then it is found
distributed in connection with the other
form over the different parts of the
body. In typhus the abdomen is flat
and perfectly free from tympanities which
is not the case in typhoid. The signs
of the consolidation of the posterior part
of the lungs are much more frequent in
the former and the dry sibilant rales
of bronchial inflammation in the latter.
The anatomical ~~and~~ ^{is} character of the
two diseases ~~are~~ very different. In
enteric the glands of Peyer as also
the mesenteric are found to be in

a diseased state but in typhus the
glands are always healthy except when
the two diseases amalgamate The
spleen is much more frequently enlarged
and softened in typhoid

Prognosis

The young are said to be more in danger
of having this disease than are the old
but it proves more fatal to the old than
it does to the young The mortality is
said to be much greater among the
blacks than it is among the whites
The favorable indications have been
mentioned already The unfavorable
are great prostration of strength great
alteration of the blood or severe local
disease Among the first are extreme
weak or absent pulse coldness of the
surface and sudden fading of the
eruption Among the second are the

abundance of dark colored petechiae
copious hemorrhages a very turbid
corruptive fœtid breath and a
purple appearance of the extremities

Among the third are violent delir-
ium or profound coma a greatly dilated
or contracted pupil stertorous breathing
which indicates of a disease of the
brain laborious respiration or short-
ness of breath which indicates exten-
sive consolidation of the lungs

Treat.

The remedies which are generally
indicated are the following

Bell. Erg. Str. Bry. Rus F
Mer. Sol. Nux. v. Phos. acid
Opium ^{hyos.} ~~Scopol.~~ Arn. Ars. Carb. v
and some others

In the inflammatory stage aconite
may often be employed with great

benefit the characteristic symptoms need not be mentioned here

Belladonna This remedy is indicated when there are alternate chills and heat Red sparkling eyes or a wild appearance of the eyes with a dilated pupil Flashes of hearing Burning thirst with aversion to drink or a desire to drink with inability to swallow Sleeplessness or restless sleep Startling during sleep or on waking Furious delirium with grasping at flocks Violent headache especially in the forehead Vertigo on lifting the head from the pillow Dry lips dry and red tongue or the tongue may be covered with a dirty coating Loss of appetite nausea and loathing of food Constipation of the bowels

Bright yellow or scanty red urine
hurried breathing frequent pulse
hurried feeble or indistinct speech
cough with pains in the chest

Hyoscyamus

Furious delirium with all sorts
of visions Sleeplessness or restlessness
or a somnolent state interrupted
by delirium which is sometimes
blond and sometimes of a furious
character great debility especially
of the hands on moving them
jactitation of the muscles and
grasping at imaginary objects pale
or red and hot face with bluish
cheeks Dim staring eyes with blue
margins around them or red sparkling
eyes with dilated and contracted
pupil alternately Hardness of hearing
with buzzing and ringing in the ears

Dry parched tongue covered with
a brownish coating

Strychnium

When there is a beating head-
ache especially in the vertex with
fainting turns obscuration of sight
and hardness of hearing Delirium
with violent tossing about dilated
insensible pupil Constiveness
Coma and stertorous breathing

Bryonia

Chills succeeded by ^{heat} all over the
body but especially about the head
profuse sweat or dry and chapped
skin or moist and clammy sur-
face Dry brownish and cracked
lips and tongue aversion to food
with nausea and a desire to vomit
or vomiting of ~~bitter~~ bilious matter
Constipation or diarrhoea red

brown or bright yellow urine with
a yellowish sediment Oppressive or
stupefying headache or pain as if
the brain were torn or bruised
Delirium day and night vertigo
and hardness of hearing Sleepless-
ness with tossing about or a con-
stant desire to sleep Frequent
irregular small and intermittent
pulse Short oppressed respiration
Stitches in the chest or side Tri-
table and vehement disposition
Despair of ones recovery Petechiae

Rus Toxicodendron

great prostration of strength - the
patient being unable to turn
himself in bed Stupefying head-
ache with vertigo Low muttering
delirium grasping at imaginary
objects Sleeplessness or some

Stertorous breathing Confusion
of ideas or loss of consciousness Burning
or redness of the cheeks hardness of
hearing dry mouth and fauces
Brownish or blackish lips and
tongue or trembling and red
tongue Great thirst Loss of
appetite

This remedy may in general
be employed in preference to
others when this fever becomes
associated with the typhoid

Mercurius

vertigo stupefaction or sense
of fullness and confusion of the
head with dullness and inhab-
ility to think headache over the
forehead and on the vertex but
especially on the forehead The
tongue may have a thick coat

tinged with a dirty yellow or it
may be clear or nearly so with
a bitter-foul taste in the mouth
Restlessness anxiety and tossing
about constipation of the bowels
or diarrhoea dark brownish urine
great debility Sleeplessness no
delirium or scarcely perceptible
stupor These vomica

Great sensitiveness of all the
organs with prevailing gastric
bilious symptoms Prostration as if
intoxicated with loss of consciousness
prostration of strength Red burning
cheeks heat in the palms of the
hands White or black dry tongue
with red and cracked eyes Dry lips
and thirst with aversion to liquids
Aversion to food Teasing pain in
the head with vertigo Colicky pains

palpitation of the heart painful
pressure and tension in the region
of the stomach and hypochondria
Sensation in the limbs as if ben-
sed and paralyzed vehement
peevish disposition

Phosphoric Acid
may be employed when there is
complete listlessness stupefaction
and dulness prostration of strength
taciturn staring dull look with
glassy eyes Sleeplessness at night
with tossing about or great drowsiness
and sleep or muttering delirium
and grasping at flocks constipation
or diarrhoea brown red urine with
reddish sediment

Opium
Came with stertorous breathing
open mouth muttering delirium

Should there be great prostration
of strength depression of the lower
jaw dim and half closed eyes slow
breathing with open mouth
alternate chills and heat congestion
of blood to the head or face circum-
scribed redness of the cheeks debil-
itating sweats red tongue con-
stipation bill will especially
on waking *Syriopodium* may
be administered

Asarum is a remedy of some moment
when there is coma with delirium
and grasping at flocks *Storax*
breathing and involuntary
discharges of feces and urine

When there is abundance
of dark colored putrescent with
coma delirium loss of consciousness

frequent and sudden starting
and sighing great prostration
with depression of the lower jaw
open mouth with glassy eyes

Arsenicum should be employed

It may be given alternately
with *Carbo vegetabilis* or alone

Other remedies are sometimes
required but need not be men-
tioned here

Diet

Attention to diet is all important
Pure cold water may be used for
drink In the early stages the
food should be very light It
may consist of weak gruels made
of oatmeal or of Indian meal and
water barley water and the like
All stimulating food must be
carefully avoided At a more advanced
period when the symptoms of debility

begin to show themselves it will be
necessary to support of the patient
by a more generous diet taking ^{care} however
ever to prohibit all stimulating
articles of nutriment Thick gruels
may now be given flavoured ^{with} sugar
and even with a little good wine
Beef tea or chicken both may
sometimes be given It will often
be desirable to give these in certain
quantities and at certain intervals
so as to insure that enough has been
taken A wineglassful may be
taken every two or three hours or
at longer intervals according to the
apparent strength of the patient
A cup of tea with dry toast or crout
cracker properly prepared may
often be allowed morning and
evening